GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:349
ANSWERED ON:23.12.2008
IMPORT OF ESSENTIAL COMMODITIES
Mahajan Smt. Sumitra

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the import of essential commodities in the country during each of the last three years and the current year, commodity-wise and country-wise;

(b) whether import of essential commodities has registered any increase during the said period; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor?

Answer

MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY(SHRI KAMAL NATH)

a)to c): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (c) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO.349 FOR ANSWER ON 23RD DECEMBER, 2008 REGARDING "IMPORT OF ESSENTIAL COMMODITIES"

(a) to (c) Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution monitors the prices of 17 essential food commodities. These items include Rice, Wheat, Atta, Gram Dal, Tur (Arhar) Dal, Urad Dal, Masoor Dal, Moong Dal, Sugar, Groundnut Oil, Mustard Oil, Vanaspati, Tea, Milk, Potato, Onion and Salt (iodised). Commodity-wise, year-wise and country-wise details of import of these items are given in publication, 'Monthly Statistics of Foreign Trade of India; Vol.II (Imports), Annual Number' published by Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics, which is available in the Library of the Parliament.

For ease of reference commodity-wise, year-wise import data for these 17 items for the period 2005-06, 2006-07, 2007-08 and April-October 2008-09 are enclosed at Annexure-1 to the reply.

As can be seen from the enclosed data, import of wheat, rice, atta, sugar, groundnut oil, mustard oil, potato, onion and salt has been insignificant during the current year, i.e., April- October, 2008. Further, import of milk and Vanaspati has also not been substantial during the period.

Import of pulses is allowed freely at zero percent customs duty to meet the deficit in domestic production over the domestic demand. Though, not significant in comparison to the domestic production, import of tea mainly takes place for blending and re-export.